

PART TWO: THE AMERICAN FRONT



May 7, 1915.

“Colonel” Edward Mandell House is on his way to meet with King George V, who ascended to the throne after Edward VII’s death in 1910. Accompanying him is Edward Grey, British foreign secretary and acolyte of the Milner Group. The two speak “of the probability of an ocean liner being sunk” and House [informs Grey](#) that “if this were done, a flame of indignation would sweep across America, which would in itself probably carry us into the war.”

An hour later, at Buckingham Palace, King George V inquires about an even more specific event.

“We fell to talking, strangely enough, of the probability of Germany sinking a trans-Atlantic liner, . . . He said, ‘Suppose they should sink the *Lusitania* with American passengers on board. . . .’”

And, by a remarkable coincidence, at 2:00 that afternoon, just hours after these conversations took place, that is precisely what happened.

The *Lusitania*, one of the largest passenger liners in the world, is en route from New York to Liverpool when it is struck by a torpedo from a German U-boat. She sinks to the bottom in minutes, killing 1,198 passengers and crew, including 128 Americans. The disaster—portrayed as a brazen, unexpected attack on an innocent passenger liner—helps to shift public opinion about the war in the US. To the average American, the war suddenly doesn’t feel like a strictly European concern.

Every aspect of the story was, as we now know, a deception. The *Lusitania* was not an innocent passenger liner but [an armed merchant cruiser](#) officially listed by the British Admiralty as an auxiliary war ship. It was outfitted with extra armour, designed to carry twelve six-inch guns, and equipped with shell racks for holding ammunition. On its transatlantic voyage the ship was [carrying “war materiel”](#)—specifically, more than four million .303 rifle bullets and tons of munitions, including shells, powder, fuses and gun cotton—“in unrefrigerated cargo holds that were dubiously marked cheese, butter and oysters.” This secret manifest was officially denied by the British government for generation after generation, but in 2014—a full 99 years after the event—internal government documents were [finally released](#) in which the government admitted the deception.

And, most remarkably of all, by Edward Mandell House’s own account, both Edward Grey and King George V himself were discussing the sinking of the *Lusitania* just hours before the event took place.

It’s a story that provides a window into the secret society’s years-long campaign to draw the United States into World War I. But in order to understand this story, we have to meet Edward Mandell House and the other Milner Group co-conspirators in America.

Strange as it might seem, there was no shortage of such co-conspirators in the US. Some, like the members of the influential [Pilgrim Society](#), founded in 1902 for the “encouragement of Anglo-American good fellowship”—shared Rhodes’ vision of a united Anglo-American world empire; others were simply lured by the promise of money. But whatever their motivation, those sympathetic to the cause of the Round Table included some of the wealthiest and most powerful people in the United States at the time.

Many of these figures were to be found at the heart of Wall Street, in the banking and financial institutions revolving around J.P. Morgan and Company. John Pierpont Morgan, or “Pierpont” as he preferred to be called, was the nucleus of turn-of-the-century America’s banking sector. Getting his start in London in 1857 at his father’s merchant banking firm, the young Pierpont returned to New York in 1858 and embarked on one of the most remarkable careers in the history of the world.

Making his money financing the American robber barons of the late 19th century—from Vanderbilt’s railroads to Adolph Simon Ochs’ purchase of *The New York Times* to the buyout of Carnegie Steel—Morgan amassed a financial empire that, by the 1890s, wielded more power than the United States Treasury itself. He teamed up with his close allies, the House of Rothschild, to bail out the US government during a gold shortage in 1895 and eased the Panic of 1907 (which he [helped to precipitate](#)) by locking 120 of the country’s most prestigious bankers in his library and forcing them to reach a deal on a \$25 million loan to keep the banking system afloat.

As we saw in “[Century of Enslavement: The History of the Federal Reserve](#),” Morgan and his associates were only too happy to use the banking crises they helped to create to galvanize public opinion toward the creation of a central bank. . . so long as that central bank was owned and directed by Wall Street, of course.

But their initial plan, the Aldrich Plan, was immediately recognized as a Wall Street ploy. Morgan and his fellow bankers were going to have to find a suitable cover to get their act through Congress, including, preferably, a President with sufficient progressive cover to give the new “Federal Reserve Act” an air of legitimacy. And they found their ideal candidate in the politically unknown President

of Princeton University, Woodrow Wilson, a man who they were about to rocket straight into the White House with the help of their point man and Round Table co-conspirator, Edward Mandell House.

Richard Grove, TragedyandHope.com.

GROVE: Woodrow Wilson was an obscure professor at Princeton University who, from reading all that I've read about him, wasn't the smartest guy, but he was smart enough to pick up when other people had good ideas and then he bumps into this guy named Colonel House.

Colonel House, he grew up in Beaumont, Texas, and Colonel House's dad was like a Rhett Butler type of smuggler privateer pirate during the Confederate war with the Union. So Colonel House: first of all, he's not a colonel. It's just like a title he gave himself to make him seem more than he was. But he did come from a politically connected family in the South that were doing business with the British during the Civil War. So Colonel House in the early 1900s makes Woodrow Wilson his protégé, and Colonel House himself is being puppeted by a few people in the layers of the Anglo-American establishment above him, and so we are left with the public persona of Woodrow Wilson. And here he is.

And he's got this, you know, this whole new Federal Reserve System that's going to come in during his administration, which was also kind of a precursor to getting America into the war because it changed our financial dependency from being self-reliant and printing our own debt-free money to being indentured to international bankers who charge us as they print money out of thin air and charge future generations for it.

The election of Woodrow Wilson once again shows how power operates behind the scenes to subvert the popular vote and the will of the public. Knowing that the stuffy and politically unknown Wilson would have little chance of being elected over the more popular and affable William Howard Taft, Morgan and his banking allies [bankrolled Teddy Roosevelt](#) on a third party ticket to split the Republican vote. The strategy worked and the banker's real choice, Woodrow Wilson, came to power with just forty-two percent of the popular vote.

With Wilson in office and Colonel House directing his actions, Morgan and his conspirators get their wish. 1913 saw the passage of both the federal income tax and the Federal Reserve Act, thus [consolidating Wall Street's control](#) over the economy. World War One, brewing in Europe just eight months after the creation of the Federal Reserve, was to be the first full test of that power.

But difficult as it had been for the Round Table to coax the British Empire out of its "[splendid isolation](#)" from the continent and into the web of alliances that precipitated the war, it would be that much harder for their American fellow travelers to coax the United States out of its own isolationist stance. Although the Spanish-American War had seen the advent of American imperialism, the thought of the US getting involved in "that European war" was still far from the minds of the average American.

A [1914 editorial from The New York Sun](#) captures the sentiment of most of America at the time of the outbreak of the war in Europe:

“There is nothing reasonable in such a war as that for which Europe has been making ready, and it would be folly for this country to sacrifice itself to the frenzy of dynastic policies and the clash of ancient hatreds which is urging the Old World to its destruction.”

The Sun was by no means unique in its assessment. A [vote taken among 367 newspapers](#) throughout the United States in November of 1914 found just 105 pro-Ally and 20 pro-German papers, with the vast majority—242 of them—remaining firmly neutral and recommending that Uncle Sam stay out of the conflict.

Once again, just as they did in Britain, the cabal was going to have to leverage its control of the press and key governmental positions to begin to shape public perception and instill pro-war sentiment. And once again, the full resources of these motivated co-conspirators were brought to bear on the task.

One of the first shells in this barrage of propaganda to penetrate the American consciousness was the “Rape of Belgium,” a catalogue of scarcely believable atrocities allegedly committed by the German forces in their invasion and occupation of Belgium at the start of the war. In a manner that was to become the norm in 20th century propaganda, the stories had a kernel of truth; there is no doubt that there were atrocities committed and civilians murdered by German forces in Belgium. But the propaganda that was spun from those kernels of truth was so over-the-top in its attempts to portray the Germans as inhuman brutes that it serves as a perfect example of war propaganda.

RICHARD GROVE: The American population at that time had a lot of German people in it. Thirty to fifty percent of the population had relations back to Germany, so there had to be this very clever propaganda campaign. It’s known today as “babies on bayonets.” So if you have no interest in World War I but you think it’s interesting to study propaganda so you don’t get fooled again, then type it into your favorite search engine: “babies on bayonets, World War I.” You’ll see hundreds of different posters where the Germans are bayonetting babies and it brings about emotions and it doesn’t give you the details of anything. And emotions drive wars, not facts. Facts are left out and deleted all the time in order to create wars, so I think that putting facts back in might help prevent wars. But I do know that they like to drive people on emotion. The “babies on bayonets” getting America into World War I, that’s a key part of it.

GERRY DOCHERTY: Children who had their arms chopped off. Nuns that were raped. Shocking things, genuinely shocking things. The Canadian officer who was nailed at St. Andrew’s cross on a church door and left there to bleed to death. These were the great myths peddled in order to defame and bring down the whole image of any justification for German action and try and influence America into war.

Gerry Docherty, co-author of [Hidden History: The Secret Origins of the First World War](#).

DOCHERTY: That’s not to say that there weren’t atrocities on both sides. War is an atrocious event, and there are always victims. Absolutely. And I offer no justification for it. But the lies, the unnecessary abuse of propaganda.

Even when in Britain they decided that they would put together the definitive volume of evidence to present it to the world, the person they asked to do this just so happened to have been former British ambassador to the United States, a man called Bryce, who was

very well-liked in the States. And his evidence was published and put forward and there were screeds of stories after stories. But then later it was discovered that in fact the people who took the evidence hadn't been allowed to speak to any of the Belgians directly but in fact what they were doing is they were listening to a middleman or agents who had supposedly taken these stories.

And when one of the official committee said "Hold on, can I speak to someone directly?" "No." "No?" He resigned. He wouldn't allow his name to be put forward with the [official report]. And that's the extent to which this is false history. It's not even acceptable to call it fake news. It's just disgusting.

The campaign had its intended effect. Horrified by the stories emerging from Belgium—stories picked up and amplified by the members of the Round Table in the British press, including the influential *Times* and the lurid *Daily Mail*, run by Milner ally Lord Northcliffe—American public opinion began to shift away from viewing the war as a European squabble about an assassinated archduke and toward viewing the war as a struggle against the evil Germans and their "sins against civilization."

The culmination of this propaganda campaign was the release of the "[Report of the Committee on Alleged German Outrages](#)," better known as "The Bryce Report," compiled for "His Britannic Majesty's Government" and presided over by Viscount James Bryce, who, not coincidentally, was the former British Ambassador to America and a personal friend of Woodrow Wilson. The report was a sham, based on 1,200 depositions collected by examiners who "had no authority to administer an oath." The committee, which was not allowed to speak to a single witness itself, was tasked merely with sifting through this material and deciding what should be included in the final report. Unsurprisingly, the very real atrocities that the Germans had committed in Belgium—the burning of Louvain, Andenne and Dinant, for example—were overshadowed by the sensationalist (and completely unverifiable) stories of babies on bayonets and other acts of villainy.

The report itself, concluding that the Germans had systematically and premeditatedly broken the "rules and usages of war" was published on May 12, 1915, just five days after the sinking of *The Lusitania*. Directly between these two events, on May 9, 1915, Colonel House—the man whom Wilson called his "second personality" and his "independent self"—wrote [a telegram](#), which the President dutifully read to his cabinet and was picked up by newspapers across the country.

"America has come to the parting of the ways, when she must determine whether she stands for civilized or uncivilized warfare. We can no longer remain neutral spectators. Our action in this crisis will determine the part we will play when peace is made, and how far we may influence a settlement for the lasting good of humanity. We are being weighed in the balance, and our position amongst nations is being assessed by mankind."

But despite this all-out propaganda assault, the American public was still largely against entering the war. It was in this context that the same group of Wall Street financiers who had maneuvered Wilson into the White House presided over the 1916 presidential election, one that the country knew would decisively conclude America's neutrality in the war or its decision to send forces to engage in European combat for the first time in history.

The bankers left nothing to chance. Wilson, who would predictably follow House's lead on all matters including war, was still their preferred candidate, but his competitor, Charles Evan Hughes, was no less of a Wall Street man. Hughes' roots were as a [Wall Street lawyer](#); his firm represented the New York, Westchester, and Boston Railroad Company for J.P. Morgan and Company and the Baptist Bible class that he led boasted many wealthy and influential members, including John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

The affable Hughes was stiff competition for the wooden and charmless Wilson, but such was the importance of American neutrality that "He Kept Us Out of War" actually became the central slogan of the campaign that saw Wilson return to the White House.

DOCHERTY: And then, of course, came the famous election of 1916. Wilson wasn't popular, but Wilson, simply—he had no kind of public persona which warmed people. On the contrary, he was a cold fish. He had dubious links with several of those who were powerful in Wall Street. But his propaganda for the election was "He Kept Us Out of War." "He was a man, vote for Wilson, he kept us out of war." And then having promised that he would continue to keep America out of war, and in fact of course within months America was *thrown* into the war by its own government.

"He Kept Us Out of War." But just as in the British election of 1906—which saw the British public overwhelmingly voting for Henry Campbell-Bannerman's Liberal Party and their platform of peace only to get the Milnerites in the cabinet entering secret agreements to bring about war—so, too, was the American public duped at the ballot box in 1916.

In fact, in the fall of 1915, over one year before the election even took place, Wilson's string-puller, Edward Mandell House, was engaged in a secret negotiation with Edward Grey, the Milnerite heading Britain's foreign office. That negotiation—long hidden from the public but finally revealed when House's papers were published in 1928—shows the lengths to which Grey and House were willing to go to draw America into the war on the side of the Allies and against the Germans.

On October 17, 1915, House drafted [a letter to Grey](#) which he called "one of the most important letters I ever wrote." Before sending it, he split it into two separate, coded messages, to ensure it would not be readable if it were intercepted. In it, he laid out a plan to steer the US into war with Germany under the false pretense of a "peace conference."

Dear Sir Edward :

. . . In my opinion, it would be a world-wide calamity if the war should continue to a point where the Allies could not, with the aid of the United States, bring about a peace along the lines you and I have so often discussed.

It is in my mind that, after conferring with your Government, I should proceed to Berlin and tell them that it was the President's purpose to intervene and stop this destructive war, provided the weight of the United States thrown on the side that accepted our proposal could do it.

I would not let Berlin know, of course, of any understanding had with the Allies, but would rather lead them to think our proposal would be rejected by the Allies. This might

induce Berlin to accept the proposal, but, if they did not do so, it would nevertheless be the purpose to intervene. . . .

Perhaps realizing the gravity of what was being proposed, Woodrow Wilson, the man who would later be elected for his ability to keep America out of war, merely added the word “probably” to House’s assurance that America would join the war.

The negotiations for this plan continued throughout the fall of 1915 and [winter of 1916](#). In the end, the British government balked at the proposal because they thought that the Germans might actually accept peace—even a peace of disarmament brokered by the US—was not enough. They wanted to crush Germany completely and nothing less than total defeat would be sufficient. Another pretense would have to be manufactured to embroil the US in the war.

When, on the morning of May 7, 1915, House assured Grey and King George that the sinking of the *Lusitania* would cause “a flame of indignation [to] sweep across America,” he was correct. When he said it would “probably carry us into war,” he was mistaken. But in the end it was the naval issue that eventually became the pretext for America’s entry into war.

The history books of the period, following the familiar pattern of downplaying Allied provocations and focusing only on the German reactions, highlight the German policy of unrestricted submarine warfare which led to the downing of the *Lusitania*. The practice, which called for German U-boats to attack merchant ships on sight, was in contravention of the international rules of the sea at the time, and was widely abhorred as barbaric. But the policy was not instituted out of any insane blood lust on the part of the Kaiser; it was in response to Britain’s own policy of breaking international rules of the sea.

At the outbreak of war in 1914, the British had used their position of naval superiority to begin a blockade of Germany. That campaign, [described](#) as “one of the largest and most complex undertakings attempted by either side during the First World War,” involved the declaration of the whole of the North Sea as a war zone. As a so-called “distant blockade,” involving the indiscriminate mining of an entire region of the high seas, the practice was in direct violation of the [Declaration of Paris of 1856](#). The indiscriminate nature of the blockade—declaring the most basic of supplies, like cotton, and even food itself to be “contraband”—was a violation of the [Declaration of London of 1909](#).

More to the point, as an attempt to starve an entire country into submission, it was a crime against humanity. Eventually reduced to a starvation diet of 1,000 calories a day, tuberculosis, rickets, edema and other maladies began to prey on those Germans who did not succumb to hunger. By the end of the war the National Health Office in Berlin calculated that 763,000 people had died as a direct result of the blockade. Perversely, the blockade did not end with the war. In fact, with Germany’s Baltic coast now effectively added to the blockade, the starvation actually continued and even intensified into 1919.

Faced with protestations from the Austrian ambassador about the illegality of the British blockade, Colonel House, now America’s de facto president, merely observed: “He forgets to add that England is not exercising her power in an objectionable way, for it is controlled by a democracy.”

This double standard was not the exception but the rule when it came to those in America's East coast establishment, who were hungry to see the US join the Allies on the battlefields of Europe. As historian and author Ralph Raico explained in [a 1983 lecture](#), it was these double standards that led directly to America's entry into the war.

RALPH RAICO: The Wilson Administration now takes the position which will ultimately lead to war. The German government is to be held strictly accountable for the death of any Americans on the high seas regardless of circumstances.

The Germans say, "Well let's see if we can live with this. As long as you're willing to put pressure on the British to have them modify their violations of international law—that is, they're placing food on the list of contraband materials, which had never been done before. The British, as you know, take your merchant ships off the high seas on the way to Rotterdam because they say anything that goes to Rotterdam is going to go to Germany, so they take American ships off the high seas. The British have put cotton—cotton!—on the list of contraband, confiscating these materials. They interfere with letters going to the continent because they think there's military intelligence possibly involved. The British are imposing in many ways on Americans. So if you hold them responsible, we'll behave ourselves as far as submarines go."

This was not to be the case, and the attitude of the Americans towards British violations of neutral rights were quite different. One reason is that the American ambassador to London, Walter Hines Page, was an extreme Anglophile. One time, for instance, he gets a message from the State Department saying, "Tell the British they have to stop interfering with American mail shipments to neutral ports. And the American ambassador goes to the British Foreign Minister Edward Grey and says, "Look at the message I've just got from Washington. Let's get together and try to answer this." This was his attitude. The British were never held to the same standard as the Germans.

At home, Theodore Roosevelt, who in previous years had been a great friend of the Kaiser's and a great admirer of Germany, now says we have to get into this war right away. Besides that, there's a campaign for preparedness for building up the American Navy, drilling American citizens in combat techniques. There's a kind of hysteria, really, that travels over the country considering that there's—at this time, certainly—no chance, no chance of some kind of immediate threat to the United States.

And people like Roosevelt and Wilson begin talking in a very unfortunate way. Wilson says, for instance, "In America we have too many hyphenated Americans"—of course he meant German-Americans, Irish-Americans—"and these people are not totally loyal to our country." Already scapegoats are being looked for and public opinion is being roused.

And this diplomatic negotiation, the exchange of memos, goes on for the next few years. In January of 1917, the Americans, not having been able to budge the British in the least on any British violation of American rights; the British blockade intensifying; the Germans really feeling hunger in a very literal sense, especially the people on the home front; the Kaiser is persuaded by his Admirals and Generals to begin unrestricted submarine warfare around the British Isles.

The American position by this time had solidified, had become a totally rigid one, and when all is said and done, when you go through all of the back-and-forth memoranda and notes and principles established, the United States went to war against Germany in 1917 for the right of Americans to travel in armed belligerent merchant ships carrying munitions through war zones. Wilson's position was that even in that case the Germans simply had no right to attack the ship as long as there are Americans on the ship. Shall I repeat that? Armed belligerent—that is to say, English—armed English merchant ships carrying munitions could not be fired upon by the Germans as long as there were American citizens on board. And it was for the right of Americans to go into the war zone on such vessels that we finally went to war.

SOURCE: [*The World at War \(Ralph Raico\)*](#)

After months of [deliberations](#) and with the situation on the home front becoming increasingly desperate, the German military commanders decided to resume their unrestricted submarine warfare in 1917. As expected, US merchant ships were sunk, including four ships in late March alone. On April 2, 1917, Woodrow Wilson made his [historic speech](#) calling for Congress to declare war on Germany and commit US troops to European battlefields for the first time.

The speech, made over one hundred years ago by and for a world that has long since passed away, still resonates with us today. Embedded within it is the rhetoric of warfare that has been employed by president after president, prime minister after prime minister, in country after country and war after war right down to the current day. From it comes many of the phrases that we still recognize today as the language of lofty ideals and noble causes that always accompany the most bloody and ignoble wars.

With a profound sense of the solemn and even tragical character of the step I am taking and of the grave responsibilities which it involves, but in unhesitating obedience to what I deem my constitutional duty, I advise that the Congress declare the recent course of the Imperial German Government to be in fact nothing less than war against the government and people of the United States.

[...]

The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind. We shall be satisfied when those rights have been made as secure as the faith and the freedom of nations can make them.

Four days later, on April 6, 1917, the US Congress issued a [formal declaration of war](#) against the Imperial German Government.

NARRATOR: Inside the White House, President Woodrow Wilson conferred with advisers and signed the proclamation of war against Germany. [. . .] Everywhere there was cheering and waving of flags. Hindsight or cynicism might make us smile at the thought that this war was sometimes called That Great Adventure. Never again would we see our entry into a major conflict excite so many to such heights of elation. Naive?

Probably. But here was a generation of young men not yet saturated by the paralyzing variety of self-analysis and the mock sciences. They believed!

SOURCE: U.S. ENTERS WORLD WAR I, MILITARY DRAFT – 1917

All along the Western front, the Allies rejoiced. The Yanks were coming.

House, the Milner Group, the Pilgrims, the Wall Street financiers and all of those who had worked so diligently for so many years to bring Uncle Sam into war had got their wish. And before the war was over, millions more casualties would pile up. Carnage the likes of which the world had never seen before had been fully unleashed.

The trenches and the shelling. The no man's land and the rivers of blood. The starvation and the destruction. The carving up of empires and the eradication of an entire generation of young men.

Why? What was it all for? What did it accomplish? What was the point?

To this day, over 100 years later, we still look back on the horrors of that "Great War" with confusion. For so long we have been told non-answers about incompetent generals and ignorant politicians. "It's the senselessness of war," the teachers of this fraudulent and partial history have told us with a shrug.

But, now that the players who worked to set the stage for this carnage have been unmasked, these questions can finally be answered.